APPENDIX I

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WPA RESEARCH MATERIALS AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
A Review and Progress Report
by John Y. Cole

[Editor's Note: This is a summary and not a complete description of WPA materials in the Library's collections. This account is based on records in the Library of Congress Archives.]

Between 1939 and 1946, the Library of Congress became a major Federal repository of publications, research materials, and administrative records produced by Federal Project Number One, the principal arts program of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Federal One, as the arts program was called, consisted of five distinct projects: the Federal Art Project (FAP), the Federal Music Project (FMP), the Federal Theatre Project (FTP), the Federal Writers' Project (FWP), and the Historical Records Survey (HRS). A conservative estimate is that approximately 5,000 cubic feet of arts project materials were forwarded to the Library from WPA offices throughout the Nation during these seven years. It should be pointed out, however, that the Library of Congress was not the only repository for Federal One materials; State libraries and historical societies throughout the United States also received significant deposits, as did many Federal agencies.

Since 1939, over three-fourths of the massive accumulation of WPA materials that came to the Library has either been added to its collections or transferred to other institutions. Most of the publications have been cataloged and added to the Library's classified collections; thousands of duplicate copies were distributed to other American libraries. Significant portions of the unprocessed research materials were added to the collections of the Library's Music, Prints and Photographs, Manuscript, and Rare Book Divisions; other segments have been deposited at several different libraries. Finally, the administrative records discovered in the collection have been transferred to the National Archives. Unfortunately, by 1964 the Library no longer had adequate space on Capitol Hill to store the WPA materials still in its possession. Therefore, approximately 1,500 cubic feet of material—primarily from the FTP, FWP, and HRS projects—was stored in a warehouse leased by the Library in Middle River, Md.

During the past decade, there has been increasing interest among scholars in all aspects of the WPA, and the Library has continued its efforts to make the WPA collection in its possession more readily available. A brief review of the origins of this collection is necessary, however, to understand its nature and potential research value.

In 1939, the WPA was reorganized and Federal One was dismantled. The FTP was abolished, but the FAP, FMP, FWP, and the HRS were continued under State, rather than Federal, sponsorship. On October 17, 1939, a special Library of Congress WPA Project was organized, financed primarily through District of Columbia WPA funds. Its primary purpose was to continue the editorial work previously performed by the "national" FWP and HRS staffs; the material being edited, as well as many of the editors themselves, came to the Library. In 1940, Librarian of Congress Archibald MacLeish changed the purpose of the Library WPA Project from editorial work to that of preserving the work produced by all of the arts projects in Federal One. The new object was to "collect, preserve, and organize for use" all pertinent "documents, manuscripts, photographs, bibliographies, social and ethnic studies, recordings, and related materials." Chief Assistant Librarian Luther H. Evans, former Director of the HRS, was given overall responsibility in all Library matters "concerning the WPA." As the new effort got underway, Gorham Munson, director of the Library Project, stated his belief that "the valuable researches, drawings, musical recordings, and writings accumulated in the state projects of the various cultural programs of the WPA are in jeopardy . . . . The ideal place to conserve them is the Library of Congress."

During 1940, the State WPA projects were instructed to send their records, publications, and research materials—including works-in-progress—to Washington. Duplicate copies were to be included. The response generally was good, except that relatively few State projects forwarded work in the visual arts. The central WPA office transferred the bulk of the receipts from the States to the Library. In most cases, ownership was also transferred, even though certain categories of documents and manuscripts remained "on deposit" for several years before the title

passed to the Library. By the spring of 1941, there were over 80 full-time employees in the Library WPA Project. The difficulty of their task was compounded by the completely unorganized condition in which most of the materials arrived.

Hundreds of WPA publications were added to the Library's classified collections and many unfinished documents, indexes, and working materials were absorbed into specialized research collections. For example, the ex-slave narratives went to the Rare Book Division; additional ex-slave documentation, along with hundreds of folklore recordings and ethnic studies to the Archive of Folk Song; an index of American composers to the Music Division; photographs and posters to the Prints and Photographs Division; and the Manuscript Division became the repository of several sets of transcripts and unpublished manuscripts. Substantial progress was also made in preliminary processing, which included basic inventorying and listing, along with the compilation of checklists and indexes.

Suddenly, in mid-June of 1941, the Project itself was endangered. District of Columbia WPA officials informed the Library that District WPA employment was about to be drastically reduced. Library officials argued that unless the Project were permitted to finish its work of making the material permanently useful, the creative effort of the arts projects participants might be rendered "almost as valueless as if the original work has not been done." Their arguments were to no avail, and on July 3, 1941, the Library of Congress WPA Project was abolished.

The momentum, however, as well as the interest of the Library of Congress, had been established. During the next five years, the creative remnants of Federal One continued to arrive at the Library—by the truckload. One of the largest acquisitions was the American Imprints Inventory Directory, which contained over seven million individual slips representing bibliographical data about books and pamphlets published in the United States through the late 19th century. The Imprints Inventory was an HRS project carried out in Chicago under the supervision of Douglas C. McMurtrie, typographer and historian of printing. Ownership of the Inventory was transferred to the Library of Congress by the Works Project Administration in 1942, but it was not physically transferred until 1945. The FTP collection, which originated with transfers from the Washington WPA office in late 1940, was substantially increased by the arrival of the Vassar College Theatre Collection in 1941 and by transfers from the National Archives in 1944 and 1946.

Even though the Library no longer had the staff needed to process the material completely, several reviews and inventories of the remaining WPA materials were made after 1941. After each review, additional material was added to the Library's collections or documents were distributed to an appropriate institution. In 1944, for example, over 500 cubic feet of administrative records and publications were transferred to the National Archives; in 1949, Frances T. Bourne, an archivist then on the staff of the National Archives, compiled a descriptive inventory "of records pertaining to the WPA Arts Projects stored on the 4th floor and Deck 11, Library of Congress Annex;" duplicate copies of HRS publications and reports were distributed to libraries in 45 States in 1958. In 1963, a final review was made by the Library's subject specialists. They agreed that the remaining collection, despite its bulk and its many duplicate materials, was of sufficient value to be preserved—even if the Library were forced to store it off Capitol Hill. As mentioned before, this transfer took place in 1964. Since then, the 1949 inventory by Miss Bourne has served as a guide to the storage collection.

Despite its bulk, the American Imprints Inventory was not sent to storage, since it was organized when it arrived at the Library and, therefore, immediately useful. In 1957, however, the Library agreed to deposit the inventory slips relating to imprints before 1801 at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Mass.; in 1970, the remainder of this massive file, which filled over 150 large filing cases, was deposited at Rutgers University Library in New Jersey. The Imprints Inventory is accessible to all interested scholars at this location, but the principal user is Scarecrow Press, Inc., which relies extensively on the file for the continuing publication of its *Checklist of American Imprints.*

In 1971, it was ascertained that several dozen boxes of WPA publications stored at the Middle River warehouse duplicated publications already in the Library's collection. These publications were therefore distributed to other American libraries through the Documents Expediting Project.

Since 1972, students and faculty of Federal City College in Washington, D.C., have been organizing and indexing portions of the ex-slave narrative collection in the Archive of Folk Song.

In August 1974, the Library agreed to deposit the FTP portion of its WPA storage collection at Middle River with George Mason University Library in Fairfax, Va. Approximately two-thirds of this sizable

collection, which occupies over 800 cubic feet, has been transferred so far. These materials will be inventoried and processed by students and faculty members from the English Department of George Mason, as well as by the George Mason University Library staff. As in all deposits, the Library retains ownership of the deposited items. After processing, selected documents and photographs will be returned to the Library for permanent retention in its specialized collections. It is expected, however, that most of the FTP collection will remain on deposit at George Mason, where it will be available for use by all interested researchers. The collection consists primarily of multiple copies of typescripts of plays, but also includes newspaper clippings, card indexes, performance records, posters, production photographs, and research data related to scenery and costume design.

APPENDIX II

CONSER
Cooperative Conversion of Serials Project

By Lois Upham
Minnesota Union List of Serials

The final report from the Association of Research Libraries' ad hoc Committee on Machine-Based Serials, written in January of this year, showed that of the 86 libraries which participated in the committee's survey of efforts in the area of machine-readable serials files, 64 had files containing a total of 1,723,568 titles. Twenty-two libraries reported having no files and one library indicated that it was in the process of converting its file. The cost of converting these files is approximately $1,500,000, not to mention the utilization of an incredible amount of duplicate conversion effort.

This report confirmed the belief held by many that there has been much duplication in the creation of machine-readable serials files. It seemed painfully obvious that insufficient communication concerning these efforts was taking place.

The beginning of an attempt to improve communications started even before the January report was written. At the 1973 ALA Annual Conference, Richard Anable called together on an informal basis a group of people who were interested in the "generation and maintenance of machine-readable union files of serials." [1] Mr. Anable's interest resulted from his participation in a Canadian project to investigate the problems associated with such files. The meeting was to have been small and no formal publicity was given to it. In fact, however, 25 people representing 20 institutions in the United States and Canada attended.

In his paper on the work of the discussion group, Mr. Anable cited three major concerns of those attending:

(1) The lack of communication among the generators of machine-readable serials files;

(2) The incompatibility of format and/or bibliographic data among existing files; and

(3) The apparent confusion about the existing and proposed bibliographic description and format "standards." [2]

It was agreed by those present that an attempt should be made to resolve some of these problems as there was no successful effort proceeding at a national level. As a result of the Las Vegas meeting, several things happened. Cynthia Pugsley from the University of Waterloo Libraries, Jay Cunningham from the University-wide Library Automation Program at the University of California, and Mr. Anable were charged with preparing a position paper outlining the need for such a group to continue, and a steering committee was selected. The Council on Library Resources agreed to fund a meeting of that committee at York University in Toronto on September 21, 1973, the purpose of which was, according to Mr. Anable, to "establish a mechanism for creating a set of 'agreed-upon practices for converting and communicating machine-readable serials data.' [and to] establish a mechanism for cooperatively converting a comprehensive retrospective biblio-

graphic data base of serials." [3] To assist in meeting these goals, several committees were formed on holdings statement notation, working communications, authority files, and cooperative conversion mechanism.

It was agreed in the fall of 1973 that the discussion group was, indeed, a worthwhile effort, and that it ought to proceed toward a cooperative conversion effort for serials. The group had no legal status, however, so a sponsoring agency was sought. There seemed to be several possibilities, and after discussions with the Library of Congress, the Association of Research Libraries, and the Council on Library Resources, and with the agreement of the National Library of Canada, it was decided that the Council on Library Resources was the most appropriate institution to serve as interim manager of such a project. CLR accepted the responsibility and agreed to fund the effort at least partially.

A number of meetings of the various subcommittees were held and several points of agreement emerged:

(1) that the National Serials Data Program (NSDP) and the MARC Serials Distribution Service of the Library of Congress were not building a national serials data base in machine-readable form fast enough to satisfy the requirements of developing library systems;

(2) that the MARC serials format developed at the Library of Congress offered the only hope for machine format compatibility, although it would likely need some modification–largely by extension;

(3) that there existed some difference between the data elements in the Library's MARC serials format and those required by NSDP (having principally to do with the key title versus the cataloging title approach) and that the two MARC serials formats should be consolidated (which has since occurred); and

(4) that major Canadian libraries were active in cooperative work on serials and that these two national efforts should be coordinated.[4]

One of the most impressive aspects of the project has been the spirit of commitment and cooperation that the participants have exhibited not only by their enthusiasm but also by the willingness to contribute both money and manpower.

As discussion continued, some decisions were made. It was felt that it would be advantageous to make use of an existing system to house the project, at least initially. (It is the group's belief that ultimately the project will be taken over by a national institution, perhaps the Library of Congress.) In the interim, the Ohio College Library Center (OCLC) seemed to be the most suitable existing system to house the project because of its proven capability to produce workable network software and support.

The primary objective of the CONSER Project is to establish a relatively comprehensive bibliographic data base of serial titles quickly enough to avoid continuing redundant and expensive conversion efforts on the local, regional, and national levels. Thus it was decided that it would be desirable to procure one or more large existing data bases to use as a base file. Following some negotiations, agreement was reached with the Minnesota Union List of Serials to supply its data base of more than 72,000 titles to the project as the principal though not the only start-up file.

The goal of the project is to convert 200,000 records in a two-year period.

The costs of CONSER fall roughly into four categories: (1) conversion center costs (costs associated with personnel, office maintenance, and the like at the centers where the data is being collected, edited, and input); (2) terminal and communication costs (including the terminals, data sets, lines, and maintenance of those components); (3) computer utilization costs (the use of the hardware and software, and storage and associated overhead of the CONSER centralized facility); and (4) custom service or product costs (any services or products not required by the group and specifically requested by a participant).

It is proposed that costs in the first category be absorbed by the participating institutions as part of the costs which they would have to assume if they were to proceed on their own. It will also serve to limit the number of prospective participants to those who have a serious commitment to the project. The estimated expense for each participant will be $25,000 to $30,000 annually for three people per terminal/year.

Funding has been and will be sought for the terminals and associated communication costs. The total cost will depend upon the number of participants, their location, and the availability of existing communication lines. This cost will probably be shared by Council and by the participants.

The computer utilization costs are expected to be born largely, when an agreement is reached, by OCLC as its contribution of the effort. Some of the secondary storage costs directly associated with the project will be paid for by the project.

The fourth category of costs will be based entirely upon contractual agreements between OCLC and the

individual participants.

Some of the major agreements of the project follow:

(1) The initial group of participants will be limited to the following 10 institutions: the Library of Congress, the National Library of Canada, the National Library of Medicine, the National Agricultural Library, the Minnesota Union List of Serials (which includes data from libraries throughout the State), Yale University Library, Cornell University Library, the New York State Library, the State University of New York, and the University of California. It should be noted that as facilities and funds become available, the initial group of participants will be expanded.

(2) The participating institutions will provide as many of the resources as possible to support their participation and the Council on Library Resources will supplement these resources to a degree in keeping with its support of other programs.

(3) As has been stated, the Minnesota Union List of Serials file was to have been and, in fact, has been procured to provide a beginning base file.

(4) Provided that a satisfactory agreement can be reached, the OCLC system will be used for the project. Any payment for project use of the hardware and software will be negotiated between OCLC and CLR.

(5) Adherence to a set of agreed-upon practices will be required for each participating library.

(6) Implementation of the project will proceed in phases, with institutions being brought in as terminals and lines are available. (The Library of Congress is expected to be first.)

(7) The MARC serials format, with some requested modification, will be used. The requests for various changes—mostly additions—have gone to the ALA RTSD/ISAD/RASD Representation in Machine-Readable Form of Bibliographic Information Committee (MARBI) for approval by the library community according to the normal procedure for reviewing proposed MARC format changes.

(8) The AACR definition of a serial will be used. Newspapers will not be excluded, but will be included on a low-priority basis.

(9) American National and International Standards will be followed whenever possible. (It should be added here that it is the stated purpose of the CONSER Project participants to establish a comprehensive data base in such a way as to accommodate existing and past standards as well as anticipated standards for format, description, and identification. It is not their intention to establish any new standards.)

(10) A post-entry editing or authentication capability is required.

(11) The necessity for a machine-readable corporate authority file is realized, but the building of the data base will not be delayed until such a file is available.

(12) AACR (North American Text) with recent modifications will be used. To maximize the quantity of input, however, records which have been cataloged under the ALA rules, including the latest title convention, will be input to await the post-entry editing function.

(13) Centers of Responsibility will be established which will be in charge of the verification of certain data elements in each record. These centers are as follows: National Library of Canada—Canadian names; Library of Congress—Non-Canadian names; NSDP—Key Titles and ISSN's (U.S. imprints); and National Library of Canada (ISDS/Canada)—Key Titles and ISSN's (Canadian Imprints). (ISDS, although not actually a CONSER Center of Responsibility, will be responsible for non-U.S. or Canadian ISSN's and Key Titles thru the NSDP and ISDS/Canada.) Most of the mentioned verification will be done in post-entry operations.

The basic approach to the file building will be on-line. It should be remembered, though, that there will be an initial base file including the MARC-S tapes and the MULS file. When a library is ready to input a record, it will first attempt to access the record from this base file. If there is a match and the inputting library has no additional or different information, it should merely be a matter of adding the local location symbol. Additional or corrected information, if available, should be added to the record. Records will be based on a minimum set of MARC-S data elements as arrived at by the Working Communications Subcommittee to which James Rush, OCLC, is chairman. Below this level, a record will be incomplete. Of course, these minimum elements are just that. Participants will be encouraged, however, to add the entire MARC-S set. There are actually four categories of data elements: mandatory at all times, essential if applicable, required if readily available, and optional. The essential if applicable category covers cases such as authors. Obviously, not every serial has an author, but if it does, it is essential to enter it. The required if readily available category covers instances where complete bibliographic information (such as a Library of Congress card) is available at the time of input. It is,

naturally, more efficient to put the data in at that time than it would be to wait.

There are a few points regarding data entry. It will be possible, once the shakedown period is over, for one participant to upgrade another participant's record. Although no policy has yet been put into writing, the group is assuming that there will be real justification for any changes. Although non-CONSER users of OCLC would be able to access and add new data to the CONSER records, they would not be able to make any permanent changes in them. Likewise, once a Center of Responsibility authenticates the headings in a record, the major fields in the record will be locked against any changes except those from Centers of Responsibility.

The problem of handling successive entry versus latest form of entry for older serials is still under consideration.

Because of matters of priority, the work of the Authority File and the Holdings Statement Groups has not moved forward as rapidly as has that of the Working Communications Group. At its meeting in February of this year, however, the Holdings Statement Group chaired by Velma Veneziano, Northwestern University, decided that for reasons of practicality, the official data base could really contain no more than the location symbols of holding libraries. The group also felt that the holdings conventions which they worked on should be available to any interested library for their own use. It is expected that the work of these groups will continue after the project gets under way.

All of this procedure will, of course, require explicit instructions and therefore a training subcommittee has been formed to develop the instructions necessary to follow the agreed-upon practices. This process is proceeding steadily.

In searching the OCLC data base, access will be quite broad. It has been proposed that the following MARC fields be accessible by on-line index keys: MARC tags 100, 110, 111, 700, 710, 711 (these are all author entries); MARC tags 022 and 023 (ISSN's and cancelled ISSN's); MARC tags 222, 245, 246, 247 (title fields); and MARC tags 760-787 (linking entry fields). These would be in addition to the present modes of access available to OCLC users.

As has been stated in some of the earlier talks, the Library of Congress will input new titles directly to OCLC, and these records will be sent back to the Library for distribution. It is anticipated that the National Library of Canada will distribute CONSER records in a similar manner. The file will also be made available to ISDS for their use, which seems in keeping with the cooperative spirit of the project and the strong desire of the participants to share the results of their efforts with the library community as a whole.

In summary, this project is the result of the efforts and cooperation of many people and institutions. The products will not be perfect since they will reflect compromises between the ideal and the practical. The project has been and will be significant not only because of the promised data bases, however, but also because it represents a new degree of cooperation among the leading institutions in the library community, a level of cooperation that has not existed before.

The CONSER data base should provide a working base from which the national libraries will be able to continue the building and maintenance functions. The library community must foster and generally encourage that effort through continued cooperation and support.

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[1] R. Anable, "The Ad Hoc Discussion Group on Serials Data Bases: Its History, Current Position and Future," *Journal of Library Automation* (December 1973), Vol. 6, pp. 207-214.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] L. G. Livingston, "A Composite Effort to Build an On-Line National Serials Data Base," LC *Information Bulletin* (February 1, 1974), Vol. 33, pp. A-35–A-38.